



United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to the EU Special Representative for Moldova, Mr. A. Jacobovits de Szeged

As delivered by Deputy Chief of Mission Kyle Scott
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
April 27, 2006

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

The United States welcomes warmly Ambassador Jacobovits' return to the Permanent Council, and thanks him for his timely report. In fact, Mr. Ambassador, you have given us more than just a report; you have also presented a vision for getting the Transnistria conflict settlement talks back on track. We would like to thank you very much for this focus. Likewise, I'd like to say at this point that we very much value the work that you've been doing, and also your cooperation with our organization, and in that regard with Ambassador Hill, whom I'd also like to welcome to the Council. My country also very much values the direct cooperation between the European Union and the United States in discussing this issue.

Mr. Chairman, the United States continues to support a peaceful settlement to the conflict that respects Moldova's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. We considered last week's consultations in Moscow among the mediators and the observers of the Five-Plus-Two process to be useful, and would like to call on all parties to re-convene in mid-May, as was called for in the Moscow discussions. Above all, we call on the Transnistrian side to return to the table and to return prepared to negotiate seriously.

The United States would also like to say at this point that we welcome the April 12 agreement that restored access for Moldovan farmers to their fields in the Dorotscaia region. This is a very positive step. We'd like to congratulate the OSCE Mission and negotiators on both the Moldovan and Transnistrian sides for resolving this humanitarian issue.

We hope that such instances of good will will continue. Unfortunately, the Transnistrian militia did not give us much time for celebration. Only nine days later we learned of the unjustified and aggressive seizure by Transnistrian forces of the Varnitsa harbor facility on April 21. We call on the Transnistrian authorities to return immediately any property taken and release any persons who may still be detained following this incident, and to refrain from further unilateral actions.

We'd like also to say that we very much appreciated the calm and responsible action of the Moldovan authorities to this provocation, and we call on the members of the Joint Control Commission to take steps to prevent similar incidents in the future.

Mr. Chairman, Ukraine and Moldova have taken steps to enforce the rule of law along their common border. We strongly support that effort. As Ambassador Jacobovits has pointed out, Moldova is clearly committed to guaranteeing and protecting the interests of legitimate businesses in the Transnistria region. The OSCE Mission and the EU Border Assistance

Mission have confirmed that there is no outside blockade of the Transnistrian region, nor is there evidence of a humanitarian crisis caused by enforcement of the bilateral customs protocol as the Tiraspol authorities have claimed.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, we would like to once again, call on the Russian Federation to resume the withdrawal of its military forces from Moldovan territory in fulfillment of its Istanbul commitments. This would send an important signal that Russia is committed to achieving a final settlement to the Transnistrian conflict that respects Moldova's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.